




DAVID SANDERS, PH.D.
Director

County of Los Angeles
DEPARTMENT OF CHILDREN AND FAMILY SERVICES
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July 5, 2006

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To: Mayor, Michael D. Antonovich
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From: David Sanders, Ph.D. 
Director

**EXTENSION REQUEST: JANUARY 10, 2006, MOTION BY SUPERVISOR BURKE
RE: FEASIBILITY OF CRISIS NURSERIES AND AN AMENDMENT BY SUPERVISOR
KNABE RE: POTENTIAL SITES**

On January 10, 2006, in response to a motion by Supervisor Burke, the Board ordered the Department of Children and Family Services (DCFS) along with the Community Development Commission to report back in 180 days on the feasibility of developing in Los Angeles County, a series of "Crisis Nurseries," State Licensed nurseries that operate with modified staffing levels, including volunteers, for the short-term residential care and supervision of children, ages 0 to 6, placed there due to a crisis or stressful situation such as homelessness.

In order to respond to your request, the Department conducted extensive research regarding existing crisis nurseries, legislative issues, site visits and a review of various literatures. Our analysis also includes input from the following persons:

- Ms. Cathy Cerniglia, Supervisor of California Department of Social Services, Foster Care Funding and Rates Bureau;
- Gary Levenson-Palmer, Regional Manager of Northern California Children's Residential Program Regional Licensing Office;
- Wendy Jones, Legislative Analyst of DCFS Legislative Office;
- Ms. Theresa Rupel, Manager of DCFS Skid Row Homeless Project; and
- Ms. Bobbette Glover, Assistant Executive Director of the Community Development Commission.

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- Wendy Jones, Legislative Analyst of DCFS Legislative Office;
- Ms. Theresa Rupel, Manager of DCFS Skid Row Homeless Project; and
- Ms. Bobbette Glover, Assistant Executive Director of the Community Development Commission.

We also made several site visits to gain firsthand information including the following locations:

- Midnight Mission, Downtown Mental Health Project, Union Rescue Mission, and Skid Row in Los Angeles. The purpose of these visits was to assess the need and support for crisis nurseries by those who serve the homeless.
- Regional Crisis Nursery Collaboration in Sacramento, Sacramento Crisis Nurseries North and South, and Yolo County Crisis Nursery in Davis. The purposes of these visits were to: a) meet with the directors of the existing crisis nurseries who meet monthly for mutual support and to provide development information to other counties; and b) observe their physical plants and meet with both paid and volunteer staff.
- "Becky's Place" at Bienvenidos Children's Center in Altadena, California. The purpose of this visit was to observe a facility in Los Angeles County that runs a similar type of nursery program.

An additional site visit has been scheduled to The Relief Nursery in Eugene, Oregon during the week of July 17, 2006. The first Relief Nursery was one of six national demonstration projects and has been successfully replicated in seven communities in Oregon. My Department is requesting a brief extension of four weeks to review, analyze and include the information gathered Oregon to produce a more thorough report on the feasibility of developing a network of Crisis Nurseries in Los Angeles County.

Unless otherwise directed, I will proceed with a new Board report submission date of Tuesday, August 8, 2006. If you have any questions, please call me or your staff may contact Helen Berberian, Manager, Board Relations Section, at (213) 351-5530.

DS:LP:ES:WK:RR:emm

c: Chief Administrative Officer
County Counsel
Executive Officer, Board of Supervisors